

NEWS RELEASE

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DROUGHT YEAR FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Average precipitation and abnormally warm temperatures were common during the early part of 2007. During the month of April North Carolina experienced below average temperatures and two early freeze events. This resulted in widespread damage to both peach and apple orchards. Many areas in the state were recording precipitation below normal, however the soil moisture remained adequate. In May, indications were beginning to show more areas of North Carolina with soil moisture levels rating poor and very poor. By the first week of May, corn was 97% planted, compared to 96% the previous year and 89% for the 5-year average. June and July saw adequate rainfall most weeks and some of the small grains were progressing faster than the 5 year average. The week ending July 1, wheat was 93% harvested compared to 83% the previous year and 84% for the 5-year average.

Hot and dry conditions extended from August until late October. Due to the dry and hot weather, phenological conditions for corn, cotton, and soybeans were above the five year average. By early September the percentage of cotton bolls opening was 73% compared to 39% the previous year and 46% for the 5-year average. Precipitation the third week of October showed the state with 70% of the topsoil moisture rated as very short, 28% short and 2% adequate. Because of lack of precipitation and pastures not supplying enough forage, cattle farmers had to supplement feedings with hay. The last week of October offered a small amount of relief to farmers. The harvesting of cotton was completed by early December with 95% complete by November 25; this compared to 80% the previous year and 82% for the 5 year average. Most small grains were planted by early-December with wheat at 95% planted the week ending on December 9. The last weeks of December were seasonally high in contrast to the abnormally low temperatures experienced the first week of 2008.

Corn production totaled 102.0 million bushels, up 4% from 2006. Yield averaged 100 bushels per acre in 2007; down from last year's record high of 132 bushels per acre. Acres harvested for grain were 1.02 million, up 280,000 acres from 2006.

Soybean production totaled 28.6 million bushels in 2007; down 34% from the 43.5 million produced in 2006. Farmers averaged 21 bushels per acre; down from 32 bushels last year. Harvested acres were 1.36 million, unchanged from 2006.

Cotton growers produced 785,000 bales in 2007 compared with 1.285 million bales in 2006. Yield per acre was up from 713 pounds in 2006 to 769 pounds in 2007. Harvested acres in 2007 totaled 490,000; down from the 865,000 harvested in 2006.

Wheat Seeding is estimated at 800,000 acres as compared to 630,000 acres planted in 2006. This is a 27% increase in wheat acres from the previous year. This ties the record set in 1985 with the series dating back to 1909.

Peanut production is 252.0 million pounds, down 6% from 2006. Harvested area is 90,000 acres, a 7% increase from 2006. Yield per acre is 2,800 pounds, down 400 pounds from last year.

Flue-cured tobacco production totaled 377 million pounds, 16% above the 324 million pounds produced in 2006. For 2007, yield per acre averaged 2,270 pounds, up 180 pounds per acre from last year. Harvested area totaled 166,000 acres, 11,000 acres above 2006.

Burley tobacco production totaled at 6.6 million pounds, virtually unchanged from 2006. Yield per acre average 1,650 pounds, 50 pounds less than last year's crop. Area for harvest totaled 4,000 acres, up 100 from 2006.

(Continued)

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All hay production totaled 1,050 thousand tons, down 37% from the 2006 tonnage. Yield per acre averaged 1.5 tons per acre, 0.9 ton less than last year. Harvested acres totaled 699,000; up from the 690,000 harvested in 2006.

U.S. flue-cured tobacco production is estimated at 503 million pounds, 10% above the October 1 forecast and 13% above last year. **U.S. burley tobacco** production totaled 207 million pounds in 2007, up 8% from the October 1 forecast but 5% below a year ago. **U.S. corn** for grain production in 2007 is estimated at 13.1 billion bushels, down 1% from the November forecast but 24% above 2006. **U.S. soybean** production in 2007 totals 2.59 billion bushels, down slightly from the November forecast and 19% below the record high production of 2006. All **U.S.cotton** production is estimated at 19 million 480-pound bales, up slightly from last month but down 12% from 2006.

NORTH CAROLINA CROPS: ACRES, YIELD AND PRODUCTION, DECEMBER 2007

CROPS ^{1/}	UNIT	NORTH CAROLINA						
		ACRES HARVESTED		YIELD		PRODUCTION		PERCENT CHANGE
		2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	
		Thousands				Thousands		+/-
Barley	Bu.	17	14	80	53	1,360	742	-45
Corn for Grain	Bu.	740	1,020	132	100	97,680	102,000	+4
Cotton: Upland ²	Bls.	865	490	713	769	1,285	785	-39
Hay: All	Ton	690	699	2.4	1.5	1,663	1,050	-37
Hay: Alfalfa ³	Ton	10	9	3.1	1.7	31	15	-52
Hay: Other	Ton	680	690	2.4	1.5	1,632	1,035	-37
Oats	Bu.	26	15	65	51	1,690	765	-55
Peanuts	Lb.	84	90	3,200	2,800	268,800	252,000	-6
Potatoes, Irish	Cwt.	15.5	14.5	210	186	3,255	2,700	-17
Sorghum for Grain	Bu.	13	9	47	60	611	540	-12
Soybeans for Beans	Bu.	1,360	1,360	32	21	43,520	28,560	-34
Sweetpotatoes	Cwt.	39	43	180	165	7,020	7,095	+1
Tobacco: Flue-cured	Lb.	155	166	2,090	2,270	323,950	376,820	+16
Tobacco: Burley	Lb.	3.9	4.0	1,700	1,650	6,630	6,600	0
Wheat, Winter	Bu.	420	500	59	40	24,780	20,000	-19
UNITED STATES								
		Thousands				Millions		+/-
Barley	Bu.	2,951	3,508	61.1	60.4	180.2	211.8	+18
Corn for Grain	Bu.	70,648	86,542	149.1	151.1	10,534.9	13,073.9	+24
Cotton: All ²	Bls.	12,732	10,492	814	871	21.6	19.0	-12
Cotton: Upland ²	Lb.	12,408	10,204	806	857	20.8	18.2	-13
Hay: All	Ton	60,927	61,625	2.34	2.44	142.3	150.3	+6
Hay: Alfalfa ³	Ton	21,434	21,670	3.36	3.35	72.0	72.6	+1
Hay: Other	Ton	39,493	39,955	1.78	1.95	70.3	77.7	+11
Oats	Bu.	1,566	1,505	59.8	60.9	93.6	91.6	-2
Peanuts	Lb.	1,210	1,195	2,863	3,130	3,464.3	3,740.7	+8
Potatoes, All	Cwt.	1,121.9	1,129.0	393	398	441.3	449.2	+2
Sorghum for Grain	Bu.	4,937	6,805	56.2	74.2	277.5	505.0	+82
Soybeans for Beans	Bu.	74,602	62,820	42.7	41.2	3,188.2	2,585.2	-19
Sweetpotatoes	Cwt.	86.8	97.5	187	189	16.2	18.5	+14
Tobacco: Flue-cured	Lb.	213.1	223.0	2,098	2,257	447.2	503.2	+13
Tobacco: Burley	Lb.	103.7	106.3	2,095	1,945	217.2	206.8	-5
Wheat: All	Bu.	46,810	51,011	38.7	40.5	1,812.0	2,066.7	+14
Wheat: Winter	Bu.	31,117	35,952	41.7	42.2	1,298.1	1,516.0	+17

^{1/} 2006 Revised. ^{2/} Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. ^{3/} Includes alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures.